THEOLOGY

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Editorial

WE are glad that Mr Ashley Sampson has given us an opportunity of commenting on his indictment of the Bishops' leadership during the war (see his letter on p. 250). Our own impression is quite different from his. We can record only a general impression. In order to reach an adequately grounded judgment it would be necessary to collect and consider all the ecclesiastical pronouncements and utterances that were made during the war. Perhaps someone will undertake this task. Such an examination of the record of the Churches in the U.S.A. during the 1914-18 war was carried out and its results published under the title *Preachers Present Arms*.[1] Its preparation occupied the author for six years. It certainly constituted a formidable indictment.

Our impression is that no similar indictment could be framed against the Churches in Great Britain on the basis of a full presentation of their witness during the 1939-45 war. Their witness has been consistent with the standards to which they were committed before the war broke out, if allowance is made for the fact that no one could have foreseen how a "total" war would develop. They have recognized that they had obligations both to the universal Church and to the British nation; that they were bound to stand both for international justice and for the tempering of justice with compassion; that it was their office both to uphold the nation's resolution and to call it to penitence. We grant that this dual witness has been borne with varying degrees of depth and of awareness of what it entailed, that an equal emphasis on both obligations has not always been maintained, and that there was too much facile talk about "a great opportunity" and "a new order." But, although a little surprised to find ourselves defending and praising the hierarchy so warmly, we should say that (with one or two exceptions) its members have served both Church and nation well under very difficult conditions, and have made the mistake neither of identifying the Church with the nation nor of separating the Church from the nation.

In order to test this impression we have read through all the published utterances and debates on various aspects of the war in the Chronicle of the Convocation of Canterbury since the beginning of 1940, and it has been thereby confirmed. We can find no trace of "thunderings" about the bombardment of English cities. Nor can we recall hearing anything of the sort in the large number of sermons to which we listened during the war. We suspect that, in order to discover statements of the kind which we should agree with him in deploring, Mr Sampson would have to search the correspondence columns of the

[1] By R. H. Abrams (New York, 1933).

newspapers, and that it is not the Bishops, and very seldom clergymen, who would be found to provide documentation for his indictment.

Christians in Britain have had in this war the advantage of possessing in the *Christian News-Letter* an organ which has faithfully and steadily expressed the workings of the Christian conscience both in its assurances and in its perplexities. If they have not made as much use of it as they might have done, it is not the leaders of the Church who are to be blamed. We suggest that the first thing anyone should do who wishes to estimate the quality and range of Christian witness in Britain during the war is to study the volumes of the *C.N.L.* There has been no complacency there, and no indifference to, or evasion of, "the whole problem of morality in warfare," but an honest and persistent attempt to give a lead that takes account of all the facts. "Courageous denunciations" are not always the most courageous or the best-informed utterances. It may require more courage, as well as more wisdom, to exhibit the complexity of a problem or to explain why it is not ripe for solution than to point to a short-cut for somebody else to follow.

The question whether the means used in total warfare are of such a kind as to forbid conscientious participation in it, when the purpose of the war is allowed to be just, is a question which Christians as a whole have not yet seen reason to answer in the affirmative, in spite of all the earnest thought that has been devoted to it. Show them reason if you can, but do not complain because they have spoken and acted in accordance with their convictions. It has yet to be shown also that the invention of the atomic bomb makes a difference in moral principle to the nature of total warfare. But who is yet in a position to calculate what may be the implications of this discovery? Persons without political or ecclesiastical responsibility are at liberty to blurt out their first thoughts; they have not failed to do so, and it may be well that they should do so.

It seems to us that the Archbishop of Canterbury, in what he said in his sermon at St Paul's and what he wrote in the *Canterbury Diocesan Gazette* for September, could hardly have uttered a more solemn or penitential warning or have committed himself to a more precise or positive moral judgment. Any statement more precise and positive must wait until there have been time and opportunity for a thorough inquiry into all that is involved. We are not sure even that sufficient information is yet available concerning the circumstances and considerations which determined the use of the atomic bomb against Japan. If the Archbishop was in possession of the requisite information and had been able to satisfy himself that the facts of the case were as Mr Sampson presents them, then we agree that he should have censured the manner in which the bomb was used. The Bishop of Winchester has since spoken to this effect (see *The Times*, September 26, 1945). In any case, we agree wholeheartedly that the Church ought to protest against the "unnecessarily callous and wanton" use of any weapon, new or old. That is a point at which mercy ought always to call a halt to the inevitable cruelty and destruction of war; or, if the expression is preferred, that is where a line must always be drawn. Christians, who still hold that there may be greater evils even than total war, will have

to think very hard how mercy can exercise a restraining influence in future conflicts, and also to search their consciences, as the facts about this war become available, in order to see where they failed. At the moment, however, mercy has the plainer duty, upon which we can all agree, of seeking to prevent the starvation of millions of people under conditions of "peace."

The Structure of Caroline Moral Theology—I

THE purpose of these notes, chosen from the matter of a projected work on the subject, is to attempt an answer to a question frequently put to the present writer: How do Anglican and Roman Catholic moral theology differ, or, to phrase it in another way, Did Anglicanism make any reforms in traditional moral theology? One sceptic even wished to know whether there is, in fact, such a thing as an Anglican approach to moral theology. The point is a very material one if it be reduced to the everyday, parochial level. For if there be indecision as to the existence of a treatment of moral theology suited by its presuppositions and method to the life of the English Church, the natural result is the widespread use of Roman Catholic manuals which assume both a view of Catholicity repudiated by Anglicans and an infallible teaching church; which take for granted a compulsory system of sacramental confession foreign to the teaching of the Church of England; and which work on the basis of a different canon law. Nor is it simply a question of the student's disentangling the contents of such books, for the difference is more radical still. There is a fundamental cleavage between the Anglican and the Roman idea of the nature and function of moral theology, as there is a separation between their views on certain aspects of sin and repentance respectively. We do not belittle the experience of the Roman Church in the exercise of this science; we are simply contending that, in the Anglican view of the Christian religion, many of the Roman conclusions are inadmissible. We are in the awkward position, however, of not having made an inventory of the family plate, with the result that the question may fairly be asked: Is there an Anglican approach to moral theology? This unfortunate ignorance of our own possessions would indeed be criminal were it not for certain sets of extenuating circumstances:

I. The temper of eighteenth-century thought, and the religious habit it helped to produce, were alien in many ways to the views of the Church and the spiritual life within which Caroline moral theology was formed. The submerging of the true concept of the Church's nature and the moralistic tone of much of the preaching of the period combined to conceal that view of moral theology which regarded it as a gradual building up of the spiritual life for the purpose of enjoying the fruition of the glorious Godhead and to make it appear unnecessary that any science should exist to deal with human acts in this respect. Moral theology became the Cinderella of Anglican divinity till the appearance of such men as Elmendorf and Skinner.

II. Moral theology had become synonymous with casuistry, which,

as a result of the excesses of certain Continental casuists, had acquired an unpleasant odour, being regarded as a system of rules for the evasion of rules.

III. The occasional nature of Anglican theology in general presented to the students of the last century the practical difficulty of unearthing from large volumes *pronunciamenti* on moral theology which would be needed to support the works of the three or four systematic Caroline moral theologians, if a comprehensive picture were to be drawn. In the main, Caroline divinity had fought shy of anything in the nature of *summæ*, though Field, Jackson, Thorndike and Scrivener were honourable exceptions in that they compiled what might roughly be termed introductions to dogmatic theology. Perhaps a sixth sense warned them that *summæ* may become millstones around the neck of theological progress, in certain circumstances.

Bearing these three excuses in mind, the first step towards answering the central question is to recall that one of the basic principles of Anglicanism is that of maintaining a due concord between authority and freedom. With truth as their goal, the Anglicans steadfastly adhered to a free following of Scripture and Antiquity, holding that the equilibrium of truth was best preserved when the tension between authority and freedom was evenly distributed. They had only to look Rome-wards, or indeed Geneva-wards, to see the result of over-stress in one direction, whilst "the new paritie and confusion of the anabaptists" furnished an illustration of the other extreme in action. Their chosen principle prevented a narrow theological insularity, for Caroline patristic and scholastic reading was vast in extent, and also forbade theological hero-worship. Every Anglican writer could make Chillingworth's words his own: "We call no man master on earth." Scrivener pours scorn on those who pin their faith to the sleeve of Calvin's divinity and rebukes those who treat as authoritative the works of any modern or ancient writer. Sanderson has a notable passage in which he joys in the absence of any Anglican legislator in theology. The one authority is the Incarnate Word and, afterwards, Scripture, which speaks of Him. We owe reverence "to the writings of the godly ancient Fathers; to canons and decrees of general and provincial councils, to the writings of great divines of early and contemporary days"; but "we may not *jurare in verba*, build our faith upon them as upon a sure foundation . . . without further examination." In this spirit, the Carolines subjected moral theology to searching examination and subsequent reformation, just as Anglicans were led to re-examine eucharistic teaching.

The primary difference to be observed is that between the Anglican and Roman views of the nature and function of moral theology itself. The latter view is expressed by Slater (*Cases of Conscience*, vol. i, p. 36): "The object of moral theology 'is not to place high ideals of virtue before the people and train them in Christian perfection . . . its primary object is to teach the priest how to distinguish what is sinful from what is lawful . . . it is not intended for edification nor for the building up of character.' " Davis (*Moral and Pastoral Theology*, vol. i, p. 4) amplifies this, but the caveat he enters betrays uneasiness: "It is precisely about law that moral theology is concerned. It is not a mirror

of perfection, showing man the way of perfection. It shows him the way of salvation, which will be attained by the observance of the commandments of God and of the Church. It must, at the same time, be admitted, that a man who aims only at keeping within the four corners of the law, will sometimes wander outside the pale, and will find himself in a very perilous situation, may even jeopardize his salvation, not because Moral Theology offers him the broad road and lax principles, but because man himself does not act up to the principles offered." What has happened here is that Roman Catholic theology after Trent separated moral and ascetic theology, and the natural preoccupation of the former with law has consequently been stressed so that it has acquired a completely legalist bias. Doubtless the concept of law as the imposition of an external promulgation helps to maintain this. The result is, as Davis hints, a tendency to be satisfied with keeping on the right side of the law. Two distinct sciences have emerged, so that, instead of one science for preparing souls for heaven, there is one which is concerned with the legality of human acts and another which is occupied with spiritual progress and holiness.

Only very slight traces of this unfortunate cleavage may be observed in the Carolines, and generally speaking they take the wider view. Sanderson claims (*XXXV Sermons*, iii), "But when all is done, *Positive* and *Practick Divinity* is it must bring us to Heaven: that is it must poise our *judgments*, settle our *consciences*, direct our *lives*, mortifie our *corruptions*, encrease our *graces*, strengthen our *comforts*, save our *souls*." Taylor speaks of moral theology as being the mainstay of "the life of religion" (*Unum necessarium*, Chap. III, I) and "the life of Christianity" (*Preface*). Indeed, the prefaces to this work and to the *Ductor Dubitantium* will repay study in this respect. The radical cause of the difference is the ideal of holiness which is the theme of Anglican devotion and is exemplified, for instance, in Taylor's *Life of Christ*, his *Golden Grove* and his *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying*, a holiness which everyone must aim at.

Here we touch on the fundamental question—namely, What is the aim of spiritual direction in the Caroline view? The answer, in its scope, goes beyond the avowed aim of moral theology as seen by Slater or Davis. The method and design of Taylor's devotional works, of Payne's *Practical Discourse of Repentance*, for example, show that the aim of the Christian is not "legality" but holiness. The Carolines were alive to the danger indicated by Davis, and their safeguard was a severe concept of the holiness to be striven for by the ordinary Christian. We do not suggest the absurd, that the Roman Communion does not hold up a standard of holiness, but we do assert that Roman Catholic *moral theology* has failed to do so effectively, by being immersed in the juristic side of the science, so that the question of legality or illegality tends to dominate it. The Carolines saw this and also discerned the reason, and accordingly they attempted to bring together moral and ascetic theology in one comprehensive science, that the dry bones of the former might live. Tillotson's great sermon on holiness (*Tracts of the Anglican Fathers*, vol. iv) depicts the ideal: "Let us conform ourselves to the holy God—endeavour to be habitually holy, which is our con-

formity to the nature of God; and actually holy, which is our conformity to the will of God."

Inevitably, as one reads their works, one is led on from the general question of their concept of the Christian standard to inquire how far the adjective "rigorist" may be applied to the Caroline concept of the nature and aim of moral theology. That the tendency, at any rate, exists, it would be idle to deny. Taylor notes the danger, but in general his position accords with that of Payne, who says that if it be severe to assert that we must "take care to live a good life if we hope to go to Heaven," then we are severe, for this is what the questions amount to. For example, Davenant has a decidedly left-wing tendency on the question of the culpability of the first motions of natural concupiscence, whilst Sanderson takes the rigoristic attitude (*e malis nullum*) in the matter of the choice of the lesser evil. Hooker and Taylor, on the other hand, allow *e malis minimum*. Whilst the tendency is there, it is neither general nor more than a tendency. It was not so much rigorism proper as the inevitable result of insistence on a lofty aim for moral theology, which would raise it from that level on which, in Taylor's criticism, only two questions are asked: "Is it lawful?" "Is it necessary?" (*Unum necessarium*, Chap. X, Sect. VIII).

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(*To be concluded.*)

Baptism with Water and with the Holy Ghost

The opinions which are here expressed arise partly from attention directed to the subject from time to time over a period of some years, and partly from the stimulus of a recent conference of the Evangelical Fellowship for Theological Literature. But I need hardly say that my companions of that conference are in no way to be held responsible for them. Nor is this an attempt even to outline the vast field suggested by the title. On the contrary, it is an effort merely to reformulate some few of the salient points, in order to invite correction and comment.

1. In the first place, I am increasingly inclined to believe that the writers of the New Testament regarded *the reception of the Spirit*—not water-baptism—as *the* distinctive and essential badge of Christianity. When St Paul found the disciples at Ephesus, who had been baptized into John's baptism only, his first question was: "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?" (Acts xix, 2). So elsewhere in the New Testament (Acts i, 5; Matt. iii, 11; Mark i, 8; Luke iii, 16) a contrast is explicitly drawn, not between two sorts of *water*-baptism—the Baptist's and the Christian sort—but between John's *water*-baptism and the Christian *Spirit*-baptism. One is reminded of the saying of a Jewish writer of the third century A.D. (quoted by Israel Abrahams in *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*, i. 45), "By fire is the essential baptism"; and I believe that water-baptism, though regularly practised by the Church from the outset, was regarded only as the negative preliminary

—the emptying of the vessel, preparatory to its positive filling. It represented (and helped to effect) repentance—an essential element, of course, in Christian conversion and incorporation in the Body of Christ, but only a preliminary element, preparing the way for the positive reception of power. It corresponded, in fact, to the mission of the Baptist, who was the forerunner pointing forward to the greater One. Baptism with the Holy Ghost by that greater One was the real focus of the experience. Baptism was necessary, but only as a negative preliminary. It is a question whether the Twelve ever received any *water*-baptism other than that of John (and in the case of most of them there is no evidence even for that). That Cornelius and his friends actually received water-baptism *after* they had received the Spirit shows how regularly water-baptism had come to be required (at any rate by the time that this narrative took shape); but that it was in this instance dictated by and dependent upon the manifest badge of Christian conversion in the shape of the Spirit's presence is equally obvious. Conversely, the mere water-baptism of Simon the Sorcerer at Samaria is not regarded as guaranteeing his reception of the Spirit. Nobody but a stickler for a purely legalistic definition of the Church would say that Simon's baptism had made him a member of the Church. It is the presence of the Spirit which really marks the Christian and the Christian community.

2. Next, the metaphor of *washing* and *purifying*, which has come to bulk rather large in (for instance) our Prayer Book, *is not often associated* in the New Testament *with baptism as such* (whether with water or the Spirit). Acts xxii, 16 ("Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins") is certainly quite explicit; and there are the famous references in Ephesians v, 26 ("the washing [*or* laver] of water") and Titus iii, 5 ("the washing [*or* laver] of regeneration"), and 1 Cor. vi, 11 and 2 Peter i, 9; and the words about the foot-washing in John xiii and the reference to "sprinkling" in 1 Peter i, 2 may have baptism directly in mind. But at least equally prominent is the connexion of baptism with *death, preliminary to resurrection with Christ.* (We are reminded of the much-quoted papyrus [P. Par. 47], where βαπτίζεσθαι is used of a flood of troubles; and of the application of the word in Luke xii, 50 to the distress which Christ Himself was facing.) Thus, in 1 Peter iii, the elaborate Flood-symbolism seems to go far beyond the idea of mere *cleansing* (whatever verse 21 may mean), and to lead to the conclusion that Christian baptism means, not *washing* but *death by drowning* —the death (if I may put it so) of our "drownworthy" nature and the floating off of the "floatworthy." Similarly, St Paul speaks emphatically of the believer's identification, at baptism, with Christ in His death and resurrection. Self-renunciation, *death* to self, seems to have been the uppermost thought. (See Rom. vi, 3, 4; Col. ii, 12.)

3. A pursuit of the New Testament metaphors brings us to another point. "*Regeneration*" and "*rebirth*" are ideas closely associated by tradition with baptism. They became, in fact, practically synonymous with it. It is therefore important to remember that, in any case, they are comparatively rare in the New Testament; and that, when they do occur, they *appear* (with the sole exception of the phrase already

quoted from Titus iii, 5, "the washing [*or* laver] of regeneration") *to be applied to the total experience of conversion, and not specifically to baptism—still less to infant baptism.* This is remarkable. It means that "baptismal regeneration," as applied to infants, is simply not scriptural at all. It may be an admirable and valuable metaphor: I am inclined to think that it is. But it is certainly not biblical, and, indeed, in the course of the conference referred to, it was plausibly suggested that this transference of phrases which the New Testament uses in connexion with the conversion-experience of adult believers to the case of unwitting infants may be traceable to post-biblical developments of a doctrine of original *sin* in terms of what really amounts to "original *guilt*" (a self-contradictory idea, but an influential one).[1] At all events, it has done much to throw dust in our eyes for centuries.

4. So far, I have been using mainly individual terms. That is not because the essentially corporate nature of the Church has been lost sight of, but because I believe that we wander away from the New Testament rather than drawing closer to its spirit if we begin from a blurred view of "the corporate." Of course New Testament Christianity is nothing if not corporate. But it is—if an ugly jargon may be coined—a *post*-individualistic, not a *pre*-individualistic sort of "corporate." What I mean is this: it would seem that in a comparatively primitive stage of society, both in ancient and in modern times (*e.g.* in mass-movement areas of India to-day) people simply do not think individually. They exist and act as a *tribal* unit or in some other *group*. A second and more advanced stage in development—logically, if not always chronologically—is marked by a violent reaction against this submerging of the individual beneath the group: the individual becomes very sharply conscious of his separateness, in his struggle to express himself over against the undifferentiated mass. But the final and most mature stage is an adjustment, once more, of the individual to the group, but, this time, such an adjustment as does full justice to the individual's self-consciousness and value as a person while also recognizing that he needs to be incorporated in the group as a member of an organic body before he can realize his true personality. Now, it is this mature type of corporateness, I take it, which is the Christian ideal; and it is merely darkening counsel to declare, as a triumphant axiom, that, since Christianity is a corporate religion, *ergo* the unconscious infant can be reborn into the Christian community. Perhaps there is a sense in which he truly can; but, if so, let us recognize that *it is not the same sense as that in which the New Testament speaks of rebirth* or baptism or any other aspect of Christian experience. Consider, indeed, how rarely the New Testament ever speaks of specifically

[1] It might, of course, be argued, conversely, that once Baptism (which certainly came to be commonly called "Regeneration") was transferred—perhaps purely by analogy with circumcision or for other reasons—from adults to infants, then it followed that if infants needed the rite of regeneration they must be guilty. I suspect that it would be difficult to distinguish in which direction the movement actually went. A great deal of useful information is collected in the two small volumes by W. Wall (Vicar of Shoreham, 1674) on *The History of Infant Baptism* (published by Griffith, Farran, Browne and Co., Ltd., in The Ancient and Modern Library of Theological Literature).

Christian relationships in *infants*. Jesus blessed the children—and they may or may not have been infants; and (says St Paul in 1 Cor. vii, 14) the children of parents, only one of whom is a believer, are "holy." Is there anything substantial that can be added to this? Baptism for the dead, in 1 Cor. xv. 29, is, at most, an exception to the usually personal attitude of the New Testament.

The upshot of all this appears to be that *a satisfactorily biblical account can be given only of the complete experience represented* (to use more modern terms) *by* "*Baptism plus Confirmation*," as an indivisible whole. It is disingenuous (or, at best, ignorant) to transfer to infant baptism a weight of doctrine and a wealth of promises which, in the New Testament, are associated only with a responsible adult experience.

5. As for *the laying-on-of-hands* (or of a hand), that is a very big question. The majority of instances in the New Testament are connected with Christ's healing miracles. Apart from these, I think that the evidence points to its being connected with *spiritual strengthening* ("confirmation," in fact) *for a task*—whether the specific and temporary task of relief organization (Acts vi, 6), or an evangelistic tour (Acts xiii, 3, *cf.* xiv, 26), or the lifelong and general task of Christian witness in the power of the Spirit. It is, in fact, usually (when not a matter of healing) the focus of the essentially and distinctively Christian experience—baptism, or endowment, *with the Holy Spirit*. If one likes to talk of Confirmation as the ordination of the laity, meaning their solemn commissioning for the work of witness, there is no harm: "ordination" means "appointment." But I do not think that the New Testament has the slightest intention of suggesting thereby "the priesthood of all believers." That was already axiomatic; indeed, the New Testament knows of *no* Christian "priesthood" *except* that of Christ Himself and of all believers as sharing His work of mediating between God and the world.

What, then, are we to conclude? That infant baptism should be abandoned? Not at all. But that we ought not to confuse the *water*-baptism of *infants*—who are involved in original *sin* but not in "original *guilt*," and who can, presumably, have no *conscious* relations with God—with the *Spirit*-baptism of responsible adults, who *have* consciously sinned and have as consciously renounced that sin and put their faith in Christ. It is the latter alone for whom the New Testament reserves practically all the phrases now commonly applied to the former; and we do not further God's glory by confusing two rites—on the one hand, a service which may (if properly ordered) be a personal dedication of the participating adults to the will of God with a view to His blessing on a babe, and which may help to surround that babe with the most potent influences for good; and, on the other hand, the service in which that babe, when he has reached years of discretion, will personally accept the empowering Spirit of God and incorporation into full membership of the Body of Christ.

This is not intended as a belittling of infant baptism, but as a plea that it should be taken seriously in the light of biblical doctrine and cleared of post-biblical misinterpretations.

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CORRESPONDENCE

THE BISHOPS AND THE WAR

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

SIR,

The advent of the atomic bomb has cast its shadow over the Peace. That vast explosion—the mightiest in history—has shaken us all; and I am deeply conscious of the dangers of making final affirmations or prophecies at such a moment. At the same time (indeed partly for this reason) I am seriously concerned that you should have published a part of the Archbishop of Canterbury's sermon on Peace Sunday, without comment or addition, and in such a manner as to suggest that it is the last word, at least for the present, that THEOLOGY has to say about this almost literally world-shaking event. For surely, whether the Archbishop's ethical summary of the situation be true or false, it is at any rate painfully negative; and some of those who would even subscribe to its main contention deeply deplore the fact that there is no censure in it for certain elements in the use of the atomic bomb that rendered it quite unnecessarily callous and wanton. No mention, for instance, is made of the fact that neither of the two cities demolished by it was among the 31 cities in Japan that were warned to expect a devastating attack from the air and no censure was passed upon the Government who released it for failing to use it on an uninhabited part of the country first—by way of warning. Neither of these utterances would have detracted one iota from what the Archbishop *did* say, and surely nobody can deny that they would have been in accordance with Christian principles—whatever they may think of the atomic bomb as a weapon in warfare.

There are, however, a number of laity (and I suspect some clergy) who feel that this was only one, though the last, occasion on which the Bishops as a whole have missed a grand opportunity for giving a lead to the Church on the whole problem of morality in warfare. For to some of us it is nothing less than an appalling scandal that, while pulpits all over the country have thundered against the bombing of Coventry, London, Bath and Canterbury, no censure or apology whatever has been passed for or against our own equally questionable methods of warfare from "dam-busting" to the atomic bomb. I'm not suggesting in this letter that we were equally guilty with our enemies in such attacks or even guilty at all. I'm only affirming that many Christian people have been deeply puzzled and disturbed by these things and that not a word of guidance, inquiry or assurance has come from Lambeth or Convocation when such positively huge moral problems have been at stake. Courageous denunciations have occasionally been made by individual Bishops; but even these received no official advocacy or even censure when notable newspapers were declaring that Bishops had no right to disturb the consciences of young airmen employed on these missions of destruction! At about the time that we were blasting each other's cities to smithereens, the Bishops assembled in Convocation suddenly got a belated bee in their bonnet about the surely rather ancient sin of fornication—which, so far as I

am aware, did little more than produce one or two coarse limericks in certain London clubs. Could humiliation really go farther and deeper than this? It was said in my presence a short while ago that the only public contribution from Lambeth to the conduct of the war was the gift in 1940 of the church bells to be rung in the event of invasion—an act which incidentally rendered every church in the land a legitimate target for the enemy's bombs. Nor was this regarded as in the least inconsistent with thundering against the enemy for "barbarism and profanity" when the churches *were* actually bombed. Is this an example of Christian reason or Christian justice? I beg you to believe, sir, that there are people in the country who have asked these questions; and it has strained the loyalty of some of us to the utmost when we have been forced to defend these actions. The negative conduct of the Church in the last war (despite Bishop Gore and a few others) did much, I am quite sure, to damage its cause in the minds of the laity and to empty its places of worship in the post-war years—as I should have thought anyone must be aware who has made a study of immediate post-war literature. What is going to happen this time? For the issues have been greater and the opportunities for action more urgent. I can only suggest that a realist must be appalled at the probabilities.

Those of us who take a supernatural view of the Church can at least console ourselves with the sure conviction that the Church will survive until the final Judgment. We have our Lord's promise; and, even if it be true that the Church has fatally compromised herself in the last six years, it won't be the first time in history that she has done *that*. Those who believe (as it was wittily and publicly affirmed recently) that the Bride of Christ has also been the concubine of Cæsar may at least take comfort from the fact that the same woman *can* be the bride of one man and the mistress of another—though of course it vastly increases the sin when the Bride of Such a One lends Herself to the other. It would be wrong, however, to attempt final judgments of this kind while we are still red hot from the atomic bomb. Nor would it be fitting for a layman to do so. All this letter hopes to do is to expose the core of the moral situation by the assertion of a few facts, and to enter a protest against THEOLOGY's attempt to "by-pass" what is perhaps the biggest moral dilemma of all by its advocacy of a purely negative apology.

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BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

SIR,

Many people will be grateful to Professor Ramsey for his review of the Schedule on Confirmation in your September issue, but, speaking for myself, I cannot see that his "rejoinder" in any way meets the difficulties put forward by the Bishop of Oxford.

Granted that all the difficulties arise from the custom which has

grown up of separating Baptism and Confirmation, is it not possible that the quandary derives partly from our habit of thinking that Confirmation in our time is "postponed," whereas the truth is that Baptism was "put forward" and its *privileges* thereby extended to those who normally would still be catechumens?

To give one illustration only of what I mean by "put forward": We can picture early Christian parents in the days of persecution expecting at any moment a visit from the Gestapo, to be followed by the death sentence. That after all was just one of the risks any Christian was prepared to undertake. But what is to happen to their child, not yet a member of the Church? The Bishop is not available—perhaps he too is under arrest. But anyone may baptize in an emergency, since originally Baptism, both Jewish and Christian, was a self-baptism; and the zealous Christian parent, or possibly the nearest presbyter, baptizes the child and rests happy in the knowledge that as Christian parents they have done all that they could do in the circumstances: and the Bishop will complete the initiation if and when the opportunity arises. The persecutions went on for several generations and an emergency practice of this sort might well come to be thought the norm by the time that peace reigned. At all events it became a practice very convenient to be observed as diocesan circuits became larger and the bishop a more remote figure. But the separation of the two parts of the rite has never been easy for theology, especially if we remember that originally Confirmation seems to have *preceded* Baptism.

Perhaps it helps to look on Baptism as an act simply of cleansing, while the gifts were conferred through the act of Confirmation. In Baptism we die to sin, in Confirmation we rise again to righteousness. In Baptism we sever our allegiance to the world, in Confirmation we are admitted to the Church. It is because Confirmation is the ceremony of admission that its administration is retained in the hands of the Bishop. It would follow that the Eucharist properly belongs to those who have been confirmed. Moreover, if this is true, and those who are baptized but not confirmed belong properly to the catechumenate, the difficulty of regarding Confirmation as a service of ordination is solved; all within the Church belong to one or other of the Orders, and the act of conferring Orders remains the function of the Bishop.

If all this is a right approach to the problem it brings up the question of how the confusion of later centuries arose. In Theology Occasional Paper No. 5, entitled *Confirmation, or Laying on of Hands*, a certain amount of evidence is adduced to show that it was not until the third century that anyone thought of connecting the Laying on of Hands in Acts with Confirmation (Confirmation from the beginning having been administered with oil), but that after that the confusion followed quickly. It is not just family loyalty which prompts me to say that the thesis propounded in that paper has never been refuted, so far as I know—though an unsuccessful attempt appeared in your pages some years ago; on the contrary I believe it to be true that several eminent scholars regarded it as deserving serious consideration. And until the theory has been adequately refuted it should surely be con-

sidered seriously in any discussion of the doctrine of Confirmation. It is not so much a question of the significance of the Laying on of Hands in Acts as of what actually happened at an actual Confirmation service and its relation to the Baptism-with-water which followed. Yet so far as I can see the compilers of the Schedule show no signs of having considered any such thesis, nor does Professor Ramsey refer to it. I have been present at several discussions of the Schedule, but in all the comments and discussions which I have heard or seen so far only the Bishop of Oxford seems to have taken into account the consequences of some such theory being true.

Two further points: it is fifteen years since as a parish priest I began to feel "up against" the quandary under discussion. In giving instruction about the Christian Virtues I wanted to explain that the sevenfold gift in Confirmation is not given aimlessly, so to speak, but that each of the gifts is directly related to one or other of the Virtues and is given for that very reason. If with the Book of Common Prayer we hold that the Virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity are given in Baptism, what happens to them while their possessor is waiting for the gifts of the Spirit needed to nourish them—understanding and knowledge, holy fear, and wisdom respectively? Surely the Bishop of Oxford is right?

It has been suggested that Prayer-Book revisers miss their opportunity by placing the rite for baptizing infants before that for baptizing adults. The suggestion ignores the time-sequence of the offices; but, be that as it may, if Baptism is really going to be interpreted as the admission to the Church, ought we not to go farther and suggest that all baptisms should therefore be administered by the Bishop and not merely referred to him beforehand? Such a change certainly would take us far theologically from the self-baptism of the early Church, but it seems to be the logical implication of a "doctrine of a long line of Anglican theologians from Hooker to Bright."

I have written, not with a desire to criticize only, but simply as a parish priest who is waiting for more help than either the Schedule or Professor Ramsey has been able to give.

Yours faithfully,
RONALD DIX.

WALBERSWICK,
SUFFOLK.

BOOK REVIEWS

†CHURCH LIFE IN ENGLAND IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY. By John R. H. Moorman. Cambridge University Press. 25s.

Dr Moorman is known for a remarkable book on the *Sources for the Life of St Francis of Assisi*, a study which won the commendation and the assent of experts on that subject. In the present book he aims at giving an account of the organization and of the ordinary life of the Church in England in that great century which has been commonly regarded, to quote M. R. James, as "the greatest of all in medieval history." This opinion was shared by Lightfoot, whose essay on *England in the Latter Half of the Thirteenth Century* used to be recom-

mended by the late Prof. Gwatkin to his pupils for careful study. It was the age of Amiens and of Westminster, of the Ste Chapelle and of Chartres, of the Angel Choir at Lincoln and of Northwold's Presbytery at Ely.

It was mainly in the monasteries and cathedrals that the new style of architecture appeared. It is seen in an austere perfection in Cistercian Rievaulx, while the Benedictines proper did not refuse the luxuriance of foliated capitals and shafts of polished marble.

We must imagine the ordinary parish church in England in this century as still, for the most part, the rather small and ill-lighted Norman structure which had sprung up everywhere after the Conquest. It was usually the monastic owners of churches who extended, altered or rebuilt them in the thirteenth century. A detailed study, accompanied by a map, of parish church architecture in the thirteenth century would be an interesting appendage to Dr Moorman's book, which is based upon a mass of printed documents, Bishops' Registers, Letters, Chronicles, Cartularies, etc., most of which are well known to students. Dr Moorman has worked over them very thoroughly and has made them yield a mass of information which he has arranged under various headings. Thus he deals in turn with the Parish, Collegiate Churches, Chantries, etc., Rectors, Vicars and Assistant Clergy, the Parsonage and its occupants, the Church and its services, the education of the clergy, clerical incomes, priest and people, preferment, bishops. "The Demand for Reform" is the title of one of the chapters, and it is this demand which is a persistent feature of much of medieval literature in prose and verse, and was constantly in the mind and on the lips of such men in every generation as had the love of souls at heart and were full of misgiving as they saw the way in which the Church of Christ, which He had purchased with His blood, was misgoverned by His own Vicar and those who surrounded him. No one doubted that Rome was the centre of nearly every evil with which the Church was afflicted, and Philip the Chancellor in that same century pictured Christ thus addressing the vineyard that He had planted:

Quid ultra tibi facere,
  Vinea mea, potui?
Quid potes mihi reddere,
  Qui pro te caedi, conspui
  Et crucifigi volui?
Et tu pro tanto munere
Baptismi fracto foedere
  Praesumis vice mutui
Me rursus crucifigere
  Et habere ostentui.

He is attacking evil prelates, who were hireling shepherds, at whose hands the blood of the sheep would be required. For centuries every well-meaning new Pope promised reform, every good Bishop like Grosseteste or Pecham struggled against a system which broke their hearts. "Lord Jesus," cried an anonymous English writer of the early fourteenth century, "either remove the Pope altogether, or diminish the power which he presumes to use among the people, for he who

abuses the power which has been granted to him, deserves to lose it." In practice, the Pope and the secular rulers, especially in England and France, plundered the Church between them, so that, as another English writer said, "between the Pope and King the Church was made an object of merchandise like an ox or an ass." By this means, the State gave recognition to and became the accomplice of Papal absolutism. The relative inefficiency of this absolutism was far from being a blessing, for it led to confusion, delay and the evasion of justice. The ancient government of the Church by Bishops was greatly impaired and never recovered.

But all through the Middle Ages the Church remained the home of the common people. It touched their lives at every point, receiving them in infancy at the font and in Confirmation, consecrating their marriages, feeding them with heavenly Food, comforting their last hours and burying them at the end under the shadow of the building in which they had worshipped as a little community throughout their lives. It is true that Confirmation was comparatively neglected and that Communion tended to be less and less frequent; it is true that the parish clergy were in general "little equipped for the spiritual guidance of their people" (p. 400); it is true that the monks were "living upon the spiritual capital which earlier generations built up"; it is true that the Friars, who seemed to have brought a living Gospel to the famished souls of men, were soon to become a byword for lack of charity and for all kinds of evil. But there is always, as Huvelin used to say, beneath the bitter waters, Arethusa, the little continuous stream of grace, and this was the hidden source from which the life of the Church was fed. Dr Moorman hints at this, but does not elaborate it, because it relates to the hidden life, to which the historical documents rarely bear witness. That it was truly there we cannot doubt, just as the great devotional movement which began, roughly, with Anselm of Canterbury and continued in the Cistercians and Franciscans, went on without a break in the thirteenth century, though the important surviving writings are few, such as those of Master Adam, St Edmund of Canterbury, Stephen of Salley, John of Hoveden, and John Pecham. Dr Moorman may have regarded a study of this movement of personal devotion as outside the scope of his book, which will remain for a long time as a valuable contribution to the history of the English Church in the most fascinating century of the Middle Ages.

F. J. E. Raby.

Hawarden.

A Compend of the Institutes of the Christian Religion. By John Calvin. Ed. Hugh Thompson Kerr. S.C.M. 12s. 6d.

A Compend of Luther's Theology. Ed. Hugh Thompson Kerr. S.C.M. 12s. 6d.

The Fellowship of Believers. Ernest A. Payne. Kingsgate Press. 3s. 6d.

Of the two "Compends" edited by Dr Kerr, that of Calvin's *Institutes* is by far the more successful, as the abridgment of a single

work must be infinitely simpler than the siftings of some eighty volumes of Luther's complete writings. The purpose of the abridgment of Calvin is "to bring the main contents of the original to the attention of a wider circle of readers by limiting the material to primary considerations." A good many English readers will find here all they need to read of Calvin, and be thankful, since whatever may be the truth about "the piquancy and charm of his literary style" no English translation of Calvin has yet succeeded in avoiding making the work unconscionably dull reading to those who must endure to the end. The student and the reader who may have occasion to quote Calvin will be wise to go from this abridgment to the original, since Dr Kerr has made "a few minor changes" (they should have been indicated) though taking no "undue liberties." No doubt the use of Dr Allen's translation had better be preferred before the Elizabethan English of Thomas Norton, though when we get "in the first place no man can take a survey of himself but he must immediately turn to the contemplation of God" (Allen) for "for first no man can look upon himself but he must needs by and by turn all his senses to the beholding of God" (Norton), we realize there are losses as well as gains in the process.

To say that any English anthology of Luther must fulfil a "long-felt want" would be an understatement. We can do with half a dozen more anthologies and a dozen treatises on Luther's doctrines and still have leeway to make up. Here, in 200 pages, is enough Luther to dispose of M. Maritain, Funck Brentano, Febvre and lesser breeds without the law, whose superficialities have succeeded in imposing on the intellectual predilections of those who favour the Catholic caricature of Luther. Yet, valuable as it is, we wish it had been better done. With a very little trouble its value could have been enhanced tenfold. The categories in which Luther's theology are classified are simply those of any modern theological textbook and have no reference to the doctrines which were fundamental or of first importance to Luther himself. Justification by Faith is tucked away as a subsection of section VI of the Christian Life. Far better to have adopted the list of subjects "with which it is necessary to deal in the true Christian Church" which Dr Kerr quotes from Luther (p. ix). Yet there is a more excellent way. There is hardly a date to be found in the whole anthology and that is, to our mind, fatal. The reason is not that Luther's teaching underwent radical changes, a view which Dr Kerr rightly denounces, but that it is embedded in historical contexts and some of his greatest writing is unintelligible save where the context is known. Dr Kerr might also have learned from Prof. Strohl, who ends his admirable anthology with a section about Luther's personal "Faith and Humour." We need some indication of the size of the man and the greatness of the work of one who provided Bible liturgy, catechism, hymnbook, who was for his church what Tyndale, Cranmer, Nowell, Watts have been for us, with a very large chunk of Dr Johnson thrown in. Luther's hymns are given in a pedestrian translation, and he who compares Thomas Carlyle's rendering of "Ein' Feste Burg" with that given by Dr Kerr (p. 119) laughs that he

may not weep. There are no references to any German editions of Luther, and this, combined with the fact that the American translations are not always unexceptionable, deprives it of much of its value to the serious student. Still, it will help.

Mr Payne's book is the most important contribution he has yet made to our knowledge of the Free Churches. It is to be hoped that it will be read by all interested in the ecumenical conversation, and it would be a great pity if it were left to the domestic concerns of his denomination. His treatment of the urgent business of the "Nature of the Church" (he gives an excellent bibliography) will be of value to all, but even more useful is his exposition of a "high church" doctrine where some might least expect it, among those who are the heirs of the Left wing of the Reformation. The confessional statements reproduced (pp. 22, 52) and the quite remarkable "Particular Baptist Confession of 1677" (Appendix A) would alone make it worth possessing. This assessment of the place and duties of the Baptists raises new hopes at a time when difficulties seem to be multiplying in the way of ecumenical agreement.

E. G. Rupp.

Chislehurst.

The English Eucharist. An Essay in Revision. By W. S. Porter. Dacre Press. 1s. 6d.

Dom Gregory Dix, in his *Shape of the Liturgy*, asks for a new Anglican liturgy for experimental use. Mr Porter's *English Eucharist* is apparently an answer to Dom Gregory's prayer. The Rite of 1549 is taken as a basis, since it both retains the traditional Roman shape and has also affinities with the familiar Rite of 1662. Its more obvious deficiencies from the traditional point of view are supplied, but two new features are added, which in effect return to primitive practice: (*a*) The Church Militant Prayer is placed before the Offertory, at the end of the first half of the service, as a modern equivalent for the old Prayers of the Faithful, which used to be said at this point and are still said here on Good Friday in the Roman rite. (*b*) The Consecration Prayer is completely transformed. It now opens with a solemn *Eucharistia* for Creation and Redemption—such as was originally a feature of the Roman and of all other rites—before proceeding to offer the gifts, to consecrate them, to offer the Consecrated Oblation and to pray for its acceptance on the Heavenly Altar, in the traditional Roman sequence. Such a *Eucharistia* is scriptural and patristic, and therefore highly desirable in any Anglican liturgy. But Mr Porter's *Eucharistia* suffers from the retention of sixteenth-century material, which limits redemption to the Cross without even mentioning the Resurrection. Cranmer's "Communion Devotions" are retained, in approximately their 1549 position before Communion. Mr Porter objects to their "intrusion" in the Rite of 1662 between the Offertory and the Consecration, which breaks the sequence between two Dominical moments. One might however reply that in their 1549 position they break the sequence between the Dominical moments of Fraction and Communion. In any rite that aims at being patristic,

as opposed to medieval or reformed, the Lord's Prayer, with its petitions *Give us this day our daily bread* and *Forgive us our trespasses*, would surely suffice as a "Communion Devotion." With this exception there is everything to be said for Mr Porter's service (though one might criticize details) if the Church of England is to be given a rite that really conforms to the "usages in the Primitive Church," to which the first Act of Uniformity appeals.

A. H. Couratin.

Oxford.

Godfrey Callaway: Missionary in Kaffraria, 1892-1942. His Life and Writings. Ed. by E. D. Sedding, S.S.J.E. S.P.C.K. 10s. 6d.

This work consists mainly of extracts from the letters and articles of a great missionary, gathered chiefly from the *Cowley Evangelist*, the monthly paper of the Society of St John the Evangelist, introduced by a biographical preface by Fr Ley, S.S.J.E. (which we wish could have been longer), and an Editorial Foreword by Fr Sedding, S.S.J.E. A man of deep spirituality and humanity is revealed in these collected writings. Page after page reveals one in constant touch with our Lord with a single heart for His service. It happened that I read this book about the same time as I saw in a Cardiff cinema the film "The Keys of the Kingdom," which must have been seen night after night for a fortnight by thousands of people of all kinds, to judge from the queues that seemed to be always forming up outside the cinema when it was showing. It was a film which showed the most devastating kind of criticism of our modern way of life and its values that there can be, for it presented us with a life whose values and ends were entirely different and left it at that, to speak for itself. The book under review will not reach those thousands, but it will surely reach many of us in the ministry, and its effect will be similar: it offers to us, in our more ordinary pastoral ministry, which is, after all, the same ministry in its essentials, silently, and without comment, the devastating criticism of a way of priestly life that is entirely different. Its effect on us as we read it cannot fail to be profound and disturbing.

Fr Callaway's love of his native flock stands out, and we see it at its richest in his love for his native assistant, Fr Jemuel Pamla. It is this love which leads him again and again to such sad reflections on the general failure of Europeans in Africa to recognize the common humanity which they share with its natives. We are always being told that those of us who have not lived in Africa must not presume to criticize what seem to us to be lamentable failures to recognize Christianity's proclamation of the equality of all races before God; but here is one who spent fifty years of his life in Africa, and his judgment of his fellow-Europeans again and again is plain; they have thrown away by selfishness a golden opportunity and set back the cause of Christ amongst the natives.

The articles and letters selected reveal in Fr Callaway a truly Franciscan love of his fellow-creatures (see especially the delightful letters from Port St John's in 1934), a wonderful apprehension of the

Natural Order as attendant on the Majesty of God and waiting on His Word, and many delightful touches of a humour which always accompanied him. Throughout his ministry his health troubled him, and in his last years there was the added burden of extreme deafness, "but," he writes home, "I fear it is not I, but the Brethren who have to bear the burden." The book is well produced and easy to read.

GLYN SIMON.

LLANDAFF.

A MANUAL OF EASTERN ORTHODOX PRAYERS. S.P.C.K. for the Fellowship of SS. Alban and Sergius. 3s.

A PILGRIM'S BOOK OF PRAYERS. By Gilbert Shaw. Mowbray. 5s. 6d.

Many manuals of private prayer are in print for members of the Church of England. The Fellowship of SS Alban and Sergius has attempted to provide a parallel manual for members of the Orthodox Church now in English-speaking countries by setting Greek prayers and devotions, culled mainly from the Euchologion, in the familiar arrangement of the Anglican manuals—Morning Prayers, Evening Prayers, Prayers for different occasions, etc. The monastic background of the Euchologion is not always concealed in the manual. A prayer (p. 7) "to pass through all the night of this present life . . . in expectancy of the coming of the bright and manifest day of thy Only-begotten Son," appropriate at the night office from which it is drawn, does not find so natural a place among individual morning devotions. The translation faithfully reproduces the spirit of the originals in the Eastern combination of liturgical elaboration with the intense individualism represented by the prayer of Philaret on page 24 and above all by the famous Jesus Prayer. Some of the attributions of prayers to particular saints are more than doubtful, and in the selected calendar the dating, which does not come from the Greek, betrays a confidence not always shared by historians. This is a popular book which will be useful in propagating a wider knowledge among English Christians of the Orthodox inner life.

Mr Gilbert Shaw has provided stronger meat. At a certain stage in the life of prayer, the acts of affective prayer which at first arise spontaneously from the meditation upon Scripture die away and become difficult to evoke. When the sensible emotion has dried up, nothing seems to be left but distraction and boredom. Here the soul, abandoning the desire for holy feelings, must continue to make simple acts of prayer by a concentration of the will. Mr Shaw has published a book of affective prayers which gives material for these acts, together with an admirable introduction upon the practice of this type of prayer. He has woven famous prayers of saints and reminiscences of the great mystics into a series of little chapters each turning on one theological idea.

The aim in supplying these exercises is excellent, but the result is not wholly successful. Although the book is entirely consonant with Scripture, the soul is drawn too far from that Scriptural language which is the most fruitful field for prayer of the affections, as any user

of the *Preces Privatæ* of Andrewes or of Mr Shaw's own Chapter IV (a catena of short passages from the Psalms) will at once realize. Surprisingly, there is too much theology. Theological truth must of course lie behind prayer; but the actual assimilation of a truth is not in itself prayer, and is in fact a distraction in time of prayer. Whereas affective prayer should constantly aim at and lead to simplicity, Mr Shaw's theological statements are frequently couched in tortuous and even stilted language ("thou art the overthrowing of all prideful separation," p. 33; "the perfect wheat was manifest in death," p. 84; "within the flow and reflow of Love's immediateness the Sea pacific," p. 143; and *passim*) which is far from the gospel directness and difficult to use as truth to which the will can assent. The author, who has read deeply in the mystical literature of the later Middle Ages and the Counter-reformation, so centres his devotions upon the Passion that the attitude of penitence is emphasized even more strongly than the note of selfless joy which springs from a wider contemplation of the whole process of Redemption and which is one characteristic of affective prayer.

This book cannot therefore receive an unqualified recommendation as a guide for the inexperienced. Those who use it would do well to make a distinction between the short acts suitable for repetition and the long reflections which should be classed as meditation. This distinction, no doubt clear in the author's mind, has not been made sufficiently plain to his readers.

Owen Chadwick.
Wellington College.

Prophets of Heaven and Hell. By Charles Roden Buxton. Cambridge University Press. 6s.

The persisting shortage of paper in this country for periodicals of the kind of Theology—even while the *New York Times* appears daily on forty large pages—encourages with regard to most books which cannot be approved a policy of silence. Moreover, when a volume owes both the writing of its last two chapters and its posthumous publication to the piety of its author's widow, a reviewer must hesitate before suggesting that her trouble and care are misdirected. Already, however, this little essay has been lavishly praised in the popular press, and a wide distribution may be feared for it. A note of warning is unavoidable.

The late Charles Roden Buxton embarked upon the writing of it in the hope of commending the study—in translation if needs must—of four poems, the *Æneid*, *The Divine Comedy*, *Paradise Lost*, and *Faust*, both Parts I and II, "to a far wider circle than they reach to-day." The four poems are so disparate and each is valuable for such different reasons that the very intention has about it an ingenuousness which reflects itself as much in the text as in the catchpenny title. The four poems are not the poets who wrote them, nor were these poets prophets either "in the popular sense" of "one who foretells the future" or in any other. To argue, as Buxton does, that they were prophets because they were conscious of it is to pursue a false scent. Could a writer's

own claim frequently reiterated suffice to make him one, the greatest of all prophets would be Mr Bernard Shaw.

For that matter, it is by no means certain, on Buxton's own showing, that Vergil, for example, looked on himself as being a prophet: didacticism is no synonym of prophecy. Furthermore, the contention that the four poems are prophetic is nullified by a couple of chapters on "myth," which, even though they are more confusing than clarifying, do recognize that the great epic poet "cannot afford" to set himself the "task of familiarizing his 'public' with a wholly new myth. . . . He singles out a myth round which a whole world of tradition has already gathered."

The monstrous attempt to have the poet usurp the office of the priest, begun by Matthew Arnold and now renewed in this dilute form, stands condemned in its own words. It will be still permissible for us to go to church, and all theological colleges need not be closed post haste.

Apart from its main purpose, two features of the book require mention. There is adumbrated in it, though not consistently held, an interpretation of the nature of history which might perhaps be developed fruitfully. Then, throughout it indicates—*e.g.*, Hardy, Jung, Shelley invoked to extol Vergil, Dante, Milton, and Goethe—how jumbled may be the mind of the English literary amateur of to-day.

MONTGOMERY BELGION.

PETERBOROUGH.

THE STUDY OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY. By Norman Sykes. Cambridge University Press. 1s. 6d.

Dr Sykes's Inaugural Lecture as Dixie Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Cambridge is felicitous, instructive and in the end, as it should be, tantalizing. He begins by describing the stages by which professorships of Church History were established at the English and Scottish universities. It is a curious story which is probably known to very few students of the subject. He then pays graceful and discerning tributes to his three eminent predecessors in the Dixie Chair—Creighton, Gwatkin and Whitney. He also explains how he himself became an ecclesiastical historian, and acknowledges his indebtedness to his teachers. Then, after some happily conceived remarks about the Dixie Professor's association with Emmanuel College, he notes that the most significant development in historical studies in the inter-war period was the expansion and vogue of research and concentration on specialist studies. While acknowledging the value of this development, he issues a warning against "the dangers of neglect of printed authorities in the zeal for the discovery of manuscript sources, and of a consequent decline in familiarity with the classics of historical writing." And he pleads for, and himself proposes to maintain, the largest possible width of interest in the whole range of ecclesiastical history. It used to be supposed that the history of the Church began with Abraham, and Professors were expected to begin their lectures at that period. They have nowadays abandoned the attempt to cover the history of the

old Israel. Obviously there would be great practical difficulties in going back on this curtailment. Yet somehow or other the notion that the history of the Church began in the first century A.D. needs to be corrected, and Dr Sykes seems to acquiesce too easily in the description of Jesus Christ as its Founder.

But it is the last few paragraphs, in which he makes some pregnant reflections on the philosophy of history and on the importance of the historical method for Christian theology, that will interest theologians most, pleasing some and perhaps making others uneasy. For our part, we are grateful for them, and much hope that the new Professor, while making further notable contributions to the post-Reformation history of the Church of England, will find time and opportunity to throw fresh light upon the great question: In exactly what sense is Christianity an historical religion?

A. R. VIDLER.

HAWARDEN.

SHORTER NOTICES

IT is significant of the incoherent condition of the modern theological world that a reviewer who has to read a number of books upon the Bible encounters almost as many different interpretations of Scripture as there are books to review. First of all there is "Nicodemus'" *Treasures of Darkness* (James Clarke, 5s.). This series of meditations upon the lessons allotted for Lent from O.T. and N.T. in the Church of England Revised Lectionary is intensely modern in the sense of being about as contrary to the "modernist" outlook as it could be. As we might expect from the author's *Midnight Hour*, his main characteristic is an absorption in the theological meaning of the passages of the Bible which he explores, and he continually chooses to present the thought of the Bible in terms of the sharpest paradox. He is determined, too, to view the Bible as a whole and invariably brings the N.T. and O.T. together into their truest connexion as both essentially related to the same Word of God. As he says so finely (p. 52), "the gentle-seeming Word of the Sermon on the Mount and the ruthless Word thundering beside the Nile are the same eternal and indivisible Word of God." But these very qualities which make *Treasures of Darkness* on the whole a singularly stimulating and refreshing book occasionally betray the author into writing, not astringent theology, but shoddy rhetoric, sometimes garnished by bad grammar. "Our soft pseudo-Christianities may reduce the Love of God to spineless sentimentality and Sunday syrup" (p. 52) is too reminiscent of Heathcliffe in *Wuthering Heights* at his frothiest. And at times the incessant booming of the paradox wearies our ears and makes us wonder whether the Bible is as universally paradoxical a document as "Nicodemus" thinks. Again, his method of interweaving O.T. and N.T. is sometimes overdone and suggests the indiscriminate enthusiasm of an early Church Father for seeing non-existent analogies between the two Testaments. "Nicodemus," in short, tends to be a little too reactionary.

In *A Portrait of Jesus*, on the other hand, by Sherwood Eddy (Allen and Unwin, 7s. 6d.), we find one of the viewpoints from which

"Nicodemus" is reacting—and we sympathize with him. A devout and enthusiastic believer in Christian idealism, in pages full of lucid and often winning argument, the author pins his faith to the undoubted truth that even if you abandon any serious belief in Christian dogma the N.T. constitutes a very fine witness to Christian experience. "The great essential," he says (p. 179), "is not the accuracy of historic facts or records, but spiritual experience, verifiable anew in every age"; if the author (who writes from New York) would travel several thousand miles east to California he would find Messrs Huxley and Heard saying much the same thing, only in favour of Buddhism. In accordance with these views Eddy presents Jesus as the One who enjoyed and can mediate the supremely true and satisfying experience of God. His Christology and soteriology seem (p. 125) to be purely exemplary; we are moved to reconciliation with God as we behold Christ: "Only in Jesus are we assured that God has the sort of goodness that completely commands us" (quoting from A. T. Cadoux). He manages to say a number of complimentary things about the author of the Fourth Gospel and St Paul while completely misrepresenting their theology (I suppose they *do* represent a convincing type of Christian experience). John, he says, gives us "a spiritual and allegorical but utterly unhistoric Gospel" (p. 174). In a treatment of St Paul's thought which characteristically ignores his doctrine of Baptism the writer assumes that St Paul invariably founded his conviction of God's redeeming acts in Christ upon his own spiritual experience; as if Paul had said, "Ye yourselves are dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord: Likewise reckon ye also that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more." Paradoxically (as "Nicodemus" would say), the reverse is true.

The dust-cover of the latest book by the Bishop of Worcester (*Jeremiah, a Prophet to the Nations*, Church Book Room Press, 3s. 6d.) speaks of the book's "vigorous and challenging message" and its "freshness and compelling sincerity." To one reader at least it appeared rather commonplace and not at all challenging; the shattering antitheses of *Treasures of Darkness* are a vastly preferable method of treating the O.T. than this attempt to present Jeremiah as a very ordinary twentieth-century religious leader.

There remain two small publications by the Tyndale Press, both originally lectures given under the auspices of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship (2s. 6d. each). The first is an examination of *The Speeches in Acts*, by F. F. Bruce, in which the author explores his subject interestingly and on the whole fairly, and comes to the conclusion that it is reasonable to believe that each of St Luke's accounts of the speeches represents a true epitome of what was really said on each occasion. The author reveals occasionally an over-anxiety to arrive at this conclusion by means of not very convincing evidence; it seems unjustified, for instance, to treat the *captatio benevolentiæ* followed by three verses, attributed to Tertullus (Acts xxiv), as a serious report of a speech. *The Theology of Prepositions*, an examination of the meaning of all the prepositions in the Greek N.T., treats a theme with great possibilities with a rather disappointing meagreness. The author (Basil F. C.

Atkinson) has some interesting things to tell us, but when we reach such great phrases as "in Christ" we look up and are not fed.

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SEAPATRICK RECTORY,
BANBRIDGE,
N. IRELAND.

Spiritualism. By H. V. O'Neill. Burns Oates and Washbourne. 5s.

A famous philosopher, asked to report on a MS. dealing with Theosophy, said among other things: "Much of Theosophy is best met by ridicule, but the doctrine of reincarnation deserves most respectful treatment." Now Fr O'Neill, in dealing with an allied heresy, uses the weapon of ridicule freely. He has kept a record of admissions made by Spiritualists, here and on the Continent, and without difficulty is able to make their position look absurd, entirely out of their own mouths. Perhaps he should have acknowledged the sincerity of those who are ready to lay bare their own weak places. The book will be most useful as an armoury of weapons from which to choose when dissuading those who are tempted to attend séances. The standpoint is the usual Roman Catholic one. Thus speaking in a foreign language unknown by the ordinary personality (well attested in the annals of abnormal psychology) is not supernormal but supernatural—that is, demonic. So is dual personality. Fr O'Neill disarms criticism by saying he excludes psychical research from the scope of his book. But the doubt remains whether there is not something in it all which, if we could get to the bottom of it, might prove the key to unlock many mysteries, and which should therefore be treated with respect.

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NOTES.—(1) The attention of Londoners and of visitors to London is directed to the series of plays that are now being put on at the Mercury Theatre, near Notting Hill Gate Station, They are new plays by young poets and are being finely acted. The first—"The Old Man of the Mountains," by Norman Nicholson—is based on the story of Elijah. The clergy in London would do well to encourage their congregations to support this enterprise.

(2) The December number will contain a letter from Mr Montgomery Belgion on "The Punishment of War Criminals," and a reply from Mr Maurice Reckitt to the review of *Prospect for Christendom.*

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